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Audit on Twitter

THE Twitter reactions to the Commission of Audit report have been many and varied.

One tweeter approved of the idea of increased competition, with another saying there was no reason a supermarket couldn't hire a pharmacist, while @maffycoocow did not relish the idea of asking check out staff for medication advice.

@Yismat said the report's recommendations would hurt pensioners since they used more medicines, while @LRussellWolpe said "Commission of Audit...read it and weep."

You can follow PD on @PharmacyDaily

Guild action on audit

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia met with the Minister of Health's office on Friday to make its disagreement with the Commission of Audit report's recommendations clear. (PD 02 May).

Guild executive director David Quilty told PD the organisation had pointed out the recommendations were contrary to a number of pre and post election commitments and the negative impact of taking this route.

The Minister's office had been general in response but had made clear that it was a report to, and not of, the government, and had recognised the Minister and Prime

Minister's commitments in relation to ownership and not allowing supermarkets into the sector, he said.

The Guild would include the report in its advocacy, and was confident the government's commitments would be adhered to, Quilty said.

Quilty also spoke to ABC News 24, saying the recommendation of a tendering system for the PBS was a concern and said the location rules ensured equitable pharmacy distribution rather than stifle competition.

MEANWHILE the National Pharmaceutical Services Association president Patrick Davies said distributors had significant concerns about the report and that any suggestion that the PBS was unsustainable was mistaken.

NAPSA had made its position "very clear" to the Minister about the ongoing impact of price reductions and the need for adjustments to remuneration.

Public interest quest

DRIVEN by community concern, the Commonwealth Government tasked the Australian National Preventive Health Agency (ANPHA) to develop further the concept of a public interest case for a minimum (floor) price of alcohol, to discourage harmful consumption and promote safer consumption.

The resultant ANPHA report seeks to establish whether a minimum price would reduce harmful consumption, as well as summarising the benefits, costs and other options.

CLICK HERE to read the report.

NICE seeks MS input

UK'S National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is inviting comment from interested persons on living with multiple sclerosis (MS), an incurable and debilitating condition experienced by more than two million people world wide.

To contribute to the consultation on updated guidelines, **CLICK HERE**.

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*Membership numbers obtained from the individual pharmacy groups' websites on 3 April 2014.

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Weekly Comment

Welcome to *PD*'s weekly comment feature.

This week's contributor is

Tony Carollo,
Director -
Carollo Horton
& Associates



The Essentials of Professional Indemnity Insurance

DID you know that a simple act, error or omission could be enough to spark a claim against you?

As a pharmacy professional you face unique risks.

Professional indemnity insurance is designed to provide you with comprehensive protection against potential claims and disputes that could lead to expensive and time consuming litigation. Here are some essential facts you should know:

1. Comprehensive protection against legal liability including:
 - Administration errors and omissions
 - Loss or damage to documents
 - Defamation
 - Medical benefits fraud by employees
 - Adverse publicity causing damage to your reputation
2. Cover all of your pharmacy including:
 - Past, present and future employees
 - Past and present sole practitioners, partners and directors
 - Past and present students, volunteers, committee and council members
 - Newly created or acquired subsidiaries
 - Casual, part-time and temporary employees
3. It's easy to obtain a quotation
You'll need to complete a proposal form and provide information relating to the scope of your services and claims history.

Antibiotics global threat

A **NEW** report from the World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned that antibiotic resistance is now a global threat and actuality.

'Antimicrobial resistance: global report on surveillance' findings included that resistance to last resort treatment for life threatening infections caused by a common intestinal bacteria had spread to all regions of the world and resistance to one of the most commonly used antibacterial medicines for urinary tract infections was now widespread, with the treatment ineffective in more than half of patients in many countries.

It highlighted the need to develop new antibiotics and diagnostics to stay ahead of resistance.

Fulbright scholar Suzanne Schultz has highlighted the need to develop new antibiotics (*PD* 13 Mar).

She told *PD* last week the report was timely, with major studies from Australia, the UK and the US reporting similar themes in the last 12 months.

Very few new antibiotics had been developed, with only five new compound classes in the last 30 years, as the cost of new drug development was high and the cost

of existing antibiotics low, she said.

Australia was in an excellent position to collaborate globally on the issue due to a highly skilled workforce and highly regarded contributions internationally.

"Research funding with a focus on antimicrobial resistance and antibacterial medicines would assist Australian researchers to contribute, collaborate and benefit from work in this area, which affects all nations, including Australia."

Medicines Australia ceo Dr Brendan Shaw said the Government needed to start thinking about how it could work with pharmaceutical companies to encourage investment in new antibiotics.

"Governments have failed to recognise that the decisions they make today about what they will pay for different therapeutic treatments has a knock-on effect 15 to 20 years later on the number of new treatments being developed by the medicines industry."

Comparing new medicines against cheaper old generics could lead industry to avoid investment areas such as antibiotics, he said.

To read the report, **CLICK HERE**.



DISPENSARY CORNER

VIT B3 from outer space?

As you next reach for a pack of vitamin B3 to sell, spare a thought for its origins.

NASA-funded researchers have identified traces of vitamin B3 in carbon-rich meteorites, supporting a theory that the origin of life may have been assisted by key molecules created in space and brought to Earth by comet and meteor impacts.

Researchers dismiss the concept of vitamin B3 coming from extra-terrestrial life such as ET, but admit that it does occur naturally in carbon rich meteors that have been in contact with water.

YOU are what you eat.

An apparently hungry female albino western hognose snake was found writhing in a hoop formation in a water dish as it appeared to be devouring itself.

The unusual behaviour, clearly not conducive to gene replication, is known to occur in sick animals unaware of what they are doing reported the UK *Telegraph*.

The western hognose snake usually lives on small rodents and is found throughout the Great Plains states of North America from Canada to Mexico.

IT'S congenital.

It's unlikely to be an inherited family health problem, but Michelangelo's David is apparently in danger of falling over due to weak ankles.

No ballet for the 500 year old work of art, then.

Italy's National Research Council and Florence University have said the hordes of tourists visiting the statue every day over several hundred years, as well as nearby regular traffic, has caused structural damage to Michelangelo's famous sculpture, the *Independent* reported.

Replicas of David's ankles were made for testing, with micro-fractures appearing in the left ankle and the weight-supporting tree stump, the publication said.

WIN LA CLINICA BABY PRODUCTS

Every day this week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a set of **La Clinica's Organic Baby Range Products**, valued at \$72 each.

Formulated with Silica Spring Water, certified organic plant ingredients of Chamomile and Calendula, LA CLINICA's Baby Soothing Lotion will leave your baby's skin feeling smooth and soothed.

This lotion is suitable for use on irritated, inflamed and sensitive skin on any part of the baby's body. The inclusion of the natural ingredient Boswellia is ideal in the skin's soothing and healing regime.

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To win, simply be the first person to send in the correct answer to the question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Name 3 other products in the La Clinica's Organic for Baby Range.

